

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

7/1938

Advertising 7407K

BREEZE HILL NEWS

VOL. III

AUGUST, 1938

No. 7

OFFICE COPY



SCILLA

hispanica Rosea Elegans

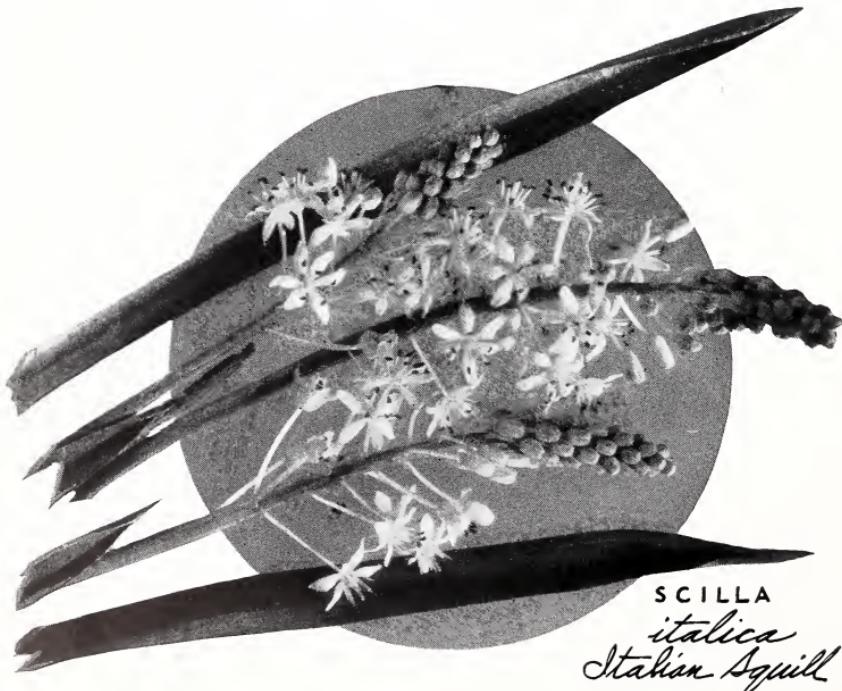
T

HE complete Hyacinth story in the last Breeze Hill News is carried along by an equally full discussion of the Scillas and the Grape Hyacinths in these pages. It should be remembered, therefore, that the two numbers cover this neglected and important family with much completeness. Every wide-awake bulb merchant who wishes to enter the new Hyacinth and Scilla door to the garden can now do so with confidence.

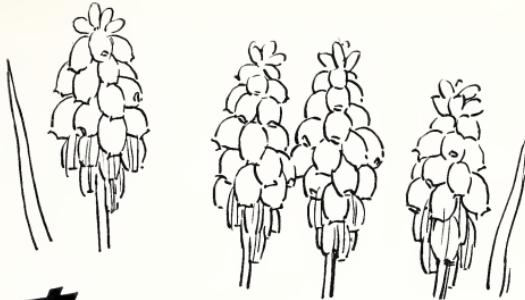
It may be remembered that the Hyacinth report rested upon 80 distinct varieties forwarded us in 1937 by the *Algemeene Vereeniging voor Bloembollencultuur*, added to which were all of the Scillas and all of the Muscari. Planted at Breeze Hill, not as a mere trial but to develop new uses for these fine subjects, they have been fully and constructively reported on so that a new angle of sale and use is thus developed.

All this is part of the service of the Mount Pleasant Press to the horticultural trades which is beyond mere printing, mere advertising. It is intelligent, constructive, helpful service, not, it is believed, rendered by any other organization in America.

The use of all this selling possibility is open to sound horticultural tradesmen. More than that, suggestions as to further investigation leading toward greater useful trade knowledge, toward the year-round selling resource at which we aim, are welcomed. Suggest, criticize, scold if you like to! We propose a helpful relation. It can be good for your business and good for our business.



SCILLA
italicica
Italian Squill



The *Scilla* or "Squill" Family

WITH the blooming of *Scilla bifolia* late in March begins the change which transforms sections of the garden from the snow-white patches of the Snowdrops and the green and white of the Snowflakes to the sky-blue of the Scillas. (Why can't we drop the drugstore word *Squill*, and stick to the easy botanical name *Scilla*?)

The Breeze Hill collection as received last fall from *Algemeene Vereeniging voor Bloembollencultuur* (The Holland Bulb Growers Association) includes fully three dozen species and varieties, about three times as many as are found in the American catalogues. This is really all wrong, for there are some unusually pleasing items in this family.

Because the spring season of 1938 was about two weeks ahead of normal, gardeners are asked to remember this fact in considering what follows. The dates given are the actual 1938 blooming dates; while in a normal season they would be several days later.

The dainty *Scilla bifolia* was the first to bloom, bursting forth just after the Ides of March, at least a week ahead of time. Its lovely drooping bells of sky-blue, tinged with violet, are carried in fine airy clusters of a dozen or more flowers on the upper 3 inches of the 5-inch stems. The little flowers themselves are just over half an inch across, and as they hang their heads it is necessary to cut them in order to see the interesting insides of the little bells. There is only one flower-stem to a plant, but occasionally compact heads contain as many as 25 to 30 flowers, almost as much of a plume as that of *Hyacinthus azureus*. They have a pleasing faint spicy fragrance. The rather bluntly pointed foliage is olive-green, 6 to 8 inches long, and $\frac{1}{16}$ inch wide.

Before the preceding variety had finished blooming, the more familiar *Sibirica* types were well under way, showing color this year during the last week in March. *Scilla sibirica* itself is a sturdy

little flower, each plant bearing from 4 to 6 blooms on quite short stems. The tiny bells are pale sky-blue, occasional flowers showing a slight violet tint when they first appear, and they have a strong musky fragrance. The foliage is olive-green, 4 to 5 inches long and from $\frac{5}{8}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch wide.

The variety Alba is not quite as strong a grower as the type, the average height being less than 4 inches, but each plant carries 5 or 6 stems, each stem with 5 to 8 flowers of translucent rather than pure white. There is a strong musky fragrance. The yellowish green foliage is about 3 inches long.

Scilla sibirica azureus is the weakest grower of the group, being only 3 inches high, but every plant puts up 3 or 4 bloom-stems, each with 2 flowers. The color is a pale sky-blue, with dark blue midribs, the reverse of the petals being deep blue, with grayish edges. There is also here a strong musky fragrance, and the olive-green foliage is only $\frac{1}{2}$ inch longer than the Alba variety.

The finest of this family is the Spring Beauty form of *S. sibirica* (see page 11). Every one of our 25 plants carried 5 or 6 stems, each bearing 2 to 4 pale violet-blue flowers, every petal darkened with a deep indigo midrib, with the reverse a much deeper shade of blue. Its musky fragrance is not intense. Olive-green foliage 4 inches long provides an attractive plant.

Sibirica taurica proved to be a splendid bloomer, of strong growth, with the plant carrying 3 to 6 flower-stems 6 to 8 inches tall, each bearing 5 to 8 flowers. Taurica's bells are lilac-blue, each petal marked with a darker midrib. Its musky fragrance seemed to be the faintest of the entire group.

Ranging in height from the 3 inches of *Azurea* to the 8 inches of *Taurica*, and in color from the rich violet-blue of Spring Beauty to the clear sky-blue of *Azurea* and the white of *Alba*, there is enough variation in the *Sibirica* section to warrant for them a place even in a small garden.

Planted 3 inches deep and a few inches apart in woodsy soil, in partial shade where they will not be disturbed for several years, these *Scillas* will form nice colonies, spreading over the ground like a carpet of blue or white according to variety. At Breeze Hill there is a shaded slope which in due season looks like a very blue sky reversed.

THE ENGLISH BLUEBELLS

Blooming about a month later than the Sibirica group, and quite different in appearance, is *Scilla nutans*, or, according to the botanists, *S. nonscripta*, commonly known as the English Bluebell. Nine varieties of this European native gave us lovely bloom for over three weeks, and that just about doubles the conventional situation.

Taking them in alphabetical order rather than by date of blooming, *S. nutans alba* was 12 inches tall, with loose 3-inch spikes of pure white, drooping bells, each plant having 3 or 4 bloom-stems above profuse foliage (see page 11). It was in good condition May 4, as also was Blush Queen, about 8 inches tall, and showing 2½-inch spikes of rosy lavender bells. There were 3 or 4 bloom-stems to each plant, and a profusion of 8-inch foliage.

Czar Peter bloomed May 7, and was the only blue variety in the collection. It varied between 6 and 10 inches tall, and the stems carried very compact 3-inch spikes of light violet-blue, flaring bells. The 10-inch foliage was soft and very profuse.

The last variety of this group to bloom was Deep Rose, coming open on May 16, at 11 inches of height, each plant carrying one bloom-stem with a large 3½ to 4-inch spike of flaring, pale rose bells much deeper in color on the lower part of the petals, giving the flower a two-toned effect. The open, airy spikes were delightful, and the plant had a profusion of 8 to 9-inch foliage.

Mon Tresor bloomed May 10 and was 12 to 14 inches tall, with immense spikes 4 to 6 inches long, carrying its widely spaced apple-blossom-pink flowers. There were 2 or 3 bloom-stems to each plant, and 8 to 10-inch narrow, upright foliage, itself quite distinct, though the flower color was much the same as that of Robin Hood.

Three days earlier was Peach Blossom, 11 inches tall with 5-inch spikes. The little bells were pale flesh-color, hardly the lovely pink that the name would indicate. There were 3 or 4 bloom-stems to each plant, and the 7-inch foliage was profuse but very soft, quite different from the heavy, upright foliage of Pinkie, blooming on May 8, and the stateliest of the Nutans group, being 12 to 17 inches tall, with 3½-inch open spikes of pale pinkish lavender. The flowers of this variety were delightfully fragrant, and in spite of the variation in height it made a good mass appearance.

Robin Hood, blooming May 10, was 9 to 10 inches tall with 3 to 4-inch narrow spikes of short-stemmed apple-blossom-pink bells, of a pleasing fragrance, each plant carrying 2 stems, with occasionally 3. The 8-inch foliage was rather floppy.

However they are such dainty little flowers and give so much for so little, that color doesn't seem so important. We need more garden material as obliging as *Scilla nutans*.

The ninth *S. nutans*, Rose Precoce, bloomed May 17. It was 12 inches tall, with 3-inch spikes of odd-looking pale rose bells. There were 3 to 6 spikes to a plant, but we didn't like to see the tips of the spikes bending over. Its profuse 6-inch foliage held upright.

Reviewing this Nutans group, we note that Alba, a white variety, was the first to bloom and was one of the shortest lived, being gone before some of the later ones were at their best. Blush Queen and Rose Precoce had their spikes so closely packed with the bells that they had a rather messy appearance. The spikes of Peach Blossom were very nice, and just a little lighter in color than those of Mon Tresor. Robin Hood was just a shade darker than Mon Tresor, and its uniform, closely packed spikes made a good appearance. Probably the finest of all was Pinkie, and although its height varied, the uniform coloring of the large bells made a strong appeal. Deep Rose was a beautiful variety, but with but one spike to a plant would need close planting; it is valuable for the beauty of the individual spikes and because it is the latest of the group to bloom. We were rather disappointed to find only one blue variety among these "Bluebells" and this, Czar Peter, was about the poorest of the lot. We preferred the pink and white sorts, even if their common name of English Bluebells did seem rather out of place.

The Fine Wood Hyacinths

Quite a little taller and more stately in appearance than the English Bluebells were the true Wood Hyacinths, catalogued as *Scilla campanulata* (botanically, *S. hispanica*), and also known as Spanish Bluebells. These natives of Spain and Portugal began blooming early in May, and the first ones were hardly finished by the time the last had opened enough to be called in full bloom, on May 25. As these latter sorts lasted way into June, we had at least six weeks of good bloom from these bulbs, which seem to us the finest of the late spring bulbous flowers.

Campanulata alba was the first to open and was in good condition May 6. It was 10 inches tall with 3 or 4 flower-stems to a plant,



MUSCARI
armeniacum —

each of which carried 3 to 4-inch spikes of pure white, mildly fragrant bells. The 9-inch foliage was profuse.

So nearly like Alba that we could not see any necessity for it was Alba maxima, which opened about the same time. Also blooming at this time was Porcelaine Sceptre, 12 inches tall, with 4-inch spikes of bluish lavender. There were 3 or 4 bloom-stems to each plant, and profuse 8-inch foliage.

THE WOOD HYACINTH SCILLAS

Another which bloomed on May 6 was the 14-inch-tall Blue Queen, with 2½-inch spikes of good-sized lavender bells, having a hint of violet, just a shade lighter than Porcelaine Sceptre. There were 2 or 3 flower-stems, and profuse foliage. This variety has a light feathery appearance which is rather pleasing.

The following sorts all were in bloom on May 10:

Bleu Celeste, 12 to 14 inches tall, had 4-inch spikes of widely flaring pale violet-lavender bells, striped with blue on the reverse, and carrying an agreeable spicy scent. The profuse foliage was at least 12 inches long. Just a little taller was Blue Bird, reaching 15 inches and carrying 4 to 6-inch spikes of medium-sized pale violet bells, striped violet-blue on the reverse. There were 3 to 6 stems to a plant, and broad, heavy, dark green foliage.

A distinct variety was Excelsior, 15 to 18 inches tall, with 3 to 4-inch spikes of large, heavy, drooping pale violet-lavender bells that carried a broad indigo stripe down the inside of each petal. There were 2 strong stems to each plant. This excellent variety had plentiful foliage, 12 inches long.

Quite different was the 12-inch, soft, floppy foliage of Perle Brillante, with 4 to 6 thick stems to the plant, each of which bore a 4 to 5-inch loose spike of heavy, flaring, lavender bells, with a blue stripe down the outside of the petals. (See page 10.)

An especially beautiful variety was The Rose, which varied from 14 to 18 inches tall, with open spikes 3 to 5 inches long, made up of flaring, reflexing pale rose bells, just a shade darker on outside than inside. There were 2 or 3 rugged stems to a plant.

The last of this May 10 group was Sky Blue, 14 inches tall, with 3-inch spikes of flaring bells, lilac-lavender inside and violet-blue outside. This was a shade darker and more violet than Blue Bird. It had a mild fragrance and 12-inch foliage.

Blue Mourant, 12 inches tall, bloomed May 16. Most of the plants had only 2 stems, and these bore 4-inch open spikes of porcelain-blue bells. Although the stems of this variety looked strong, most of them bent over. It had profuse 12-inch foliage.

The later Rose Queen opened on May 21. It was 18 inches tall and bore 2 or 3 bloom-stems to each plant, these having 4-inch, closely packed spikes of drooping bells of a lovely shade of pale wild-rose. Its 10-inch foliage was soft and floppy.

Eight varieties could not be recorded until May 25.

Arnold Prinsen was 18 inches tall, with 2 or 3 bloom-stems to the plant, each bearing 3 to 4-inch flower-spikes. Its short-stemmed

bells were all twisted around on one side like the obedient plant, or physostegia. The fragrant flowers were lavender with a pale violet tinge. Its profuse foliage was about 12 inches long.

Of the same height, Bridesmaid had 2 or 3 stems to each plant, and the spikes ranged from 3 to 6 inches long. The bells, instead of drooping, stood out almost at right angles to the stem. The pale lavender, pinkish tinged, attractive flowers carried a strong musky scent. There was heavy foliage, up to 15 inches long.

Grand Maitre was 15 inches tall, with 3 to 4-inch spikes of which the bells were held at right angles instead of drooping. They were lavender, with a violet stripe down the inside of each petal, the outside being tinged with violet and with an indigo hair-line down the middle of each segment. Two stems grew to each plant, and these bent badly. The profuse soft foliage was 16 inches long.

Jacques, 18 inches tall, had great spikes, varying from 4 to 7 inches long and at least 3 inches in diameter. Its broad, flaring bells were pale lavender, tinted with pink. The 12-inch foliage was profuse and very soft.

Pyramidal was 12 to 15 inches tall, with compact spikes, 3 to 4 inches long and only 1½ inches through—about the slenderest of the group. The color was clear rose, slightly deeper on the outside. It had firm 9-inch foliage.

Rosalind, 15 to 17 inches tall, had only 1 or 2 stems to a plant but carried 4 to 6-inch, loose, graceful flower-spikes. Its broad, pale pinkish lavender bells carried a strong musky scent. It had 10-inch light green foliage.

Rosea Elegans, of whose 18 inches between 6 and 9 inches was flower-spike, 3 to 4 inches across, also carried bells at right angles to the stem instead of drooping. The color was recorded as pale rose—so pale that it might be termed rosy lavender. There were 3 or 4 stems to each plant and long, narrow, 15-inch foliage.

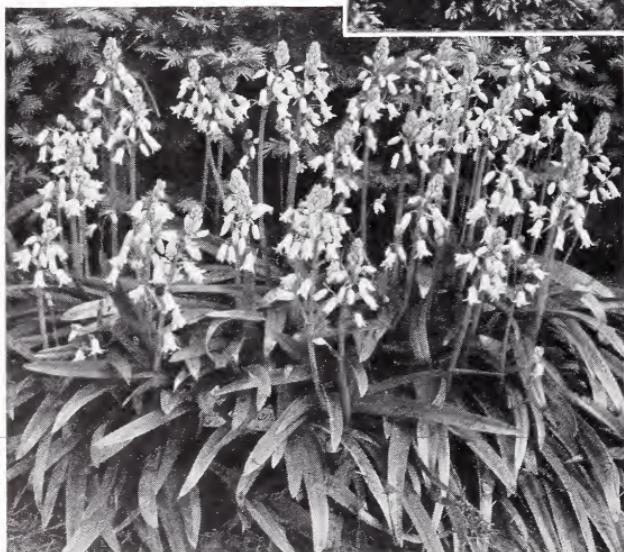
Rubra was the last of this group, and was 16 inches tall, with badly bent stems. The spikes were 3 inches long and quite compact, with heavy bells of deep rose over lavender which in a mass took on a purplish tint. The flowers had a strong musky scent, and the plants had upright, light green foliage 6 to 8 inches long. This was the darkest in color of this group but, unfortunately, the spikes were poor and the stems not good.

WHAT WE THINK ABOUT THESE SCILLAS

Commenting on the Campanulata varieties, it seemed there was not enough difference between Campanulata alba and Alba maxima for anyone to want both, but because of the snowy whiteness of the flowers, one or the other should

Four Scintillating Scillas

SCILLA
hispanica
varieties



SCILLA
hispanica 'Pearly Brillante'





SCILLA
sibirica
Spring Beauty

be in every collection, both for their garden beauty and for their cut-flower value.

Of the blue *Scilla campanulata*, Porcelaine Sceptre was the earliest to open and would be important for this reason alone, but it has the added value of freedom of attractive bloom. The flowers of Bleu Celeste were of good coloring but the spikes had a rather careless look, while Bleu Mourant, with flowers of much the same shade, had larger bells and better-filled spikes. Blue Queen was rather small, and was one of the quickest to disappear.

Excelsior had the largest, heaviest bells, but the spikes were too short and seemed clumsy. It was darker in color than the preceding, while Perle Brillante (see page 10) was about the lightest of the blues, and had splendid spikes of nicely formed bells, quite different from the ragged-looking spikes of Blue Bird, the bells of which were altogether too far apart on the stem. Sky Blue was one of the loveliest of all with its distinctive coloring, and we also liked the way the bells stood out instead of drooping, but, unfortunately, the stems were too weak for the fine spikes and rain flattened it worse than any of the group. Poor stems kept Grand Maitre from being called first class—a real disappointment, as it was distinct both in color and in the width of its bells.

Of the pink varieties, The Rose was the first to bloom and not only made a fine display but its long stems and good keeping qualities suggested its cutting value. We rated Rosea Elegans high because of its large, loose spikes of broad bells having good color. It was tall, and the most prolific bloomer of the group. Jacques was about the same height and build of spike, but had less bells and the color was not so good. Bridesmaid, with short stumpy spikes was a pleasing variety although it did not provide as many bloom-stalks as the above two.

Rosalind, shorter than the three previous varieties, had but one stem to the plant, but that was of good color, and much like that of Rosea Elegans. Rose Queen, of a darker shade, followed The Rose and drew favorable comment. Arnold Prinsen was a tall variety but the spikes were poor and it seemed unimportant. Pyramidale was too short and its small spikes seemed very ordinary, compared with most of the others, but its color was distinct and the flaring bells

attractive. Although Rubra's short stems and small spikes were against it, we should want it for its distinct coloring, the darkest of the pink section.

The Wood Hyacinths, like the other Squills, revel in a woodsy soil, and although they will flourish in almost any situation, will probably do their best in partial shade. If planted in a place where they will not be disturbed for some years and given an occasional top-dressing of old manure, they will flourish and increase, as do the Siberian Squills.

By planting the early varieties in full sun, or at least in the brighter parts of the garden, and the late varieties on the north side of a building or in partial shade, the season can be extended considerably, and, of course, the flowers which have some protection from the direct sunlight will be found to be longer lived.

If the colonies become too crowded, they can be dug up and divided any time after the foliage does down.

All the Scillas make splendid pot-plants. If 5 or 6 bulbs are put in a 5 or 6-inch pot, placed in a coldframe until growth starts, and then brought into the house and placed near the glass, they will give satisfaction.

Bulbs should be obtained as early in the fall as possible and planted just as soon as received. They dislike being out of the ground, and should not be allowed to get too dry. Don't "treat 'em rough"!

Wood Hyacinths make splendid cut-flowers for the house, and if, like gladiolus, they are cut when the spikes begin to open they will last for several days, much longer than ordinary cut-flowers.

THE ITALIAN SCILLA

Scilla italicica bloomed May 7, 10 inches tall, with 3-inch flower-spikes $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches across (see page 2). These spikes were composed of 40 to 50 short-stemmed flowers of light steel-blue, almost a gray, which probably might be termed azure. We recorded a peculiar mild scent. The 8-inch foliage was light green and there was only about one dozen leaves to each plant. This is an interestingly different Scilla of which we shall want more.



MUSCARI
comosum monstruosum

The Muscari or Grape Hyacinths

There were 17 species and varieties of Grape Hyacinths in the Breeze Hill collection this spring. As their bloom covered the entire two months of April and May, it is best to describe them in blooming order, rather than alphabetically.

This is a strange family; there are many types of flowers some of which are really beautiful while others are the queerest of oddities. They are not at all spectacular, but do make desirably different groups or edgings. The curiosities have a place in rockeries, and in gardens where unusual things are welcome.

The first of the family to bloom was *Muscari azureum*, usually sold in this country as *Hyacinthus azureus*. Its first flowers opened about the middle of March and remained in good condition after April 1. The heavy, closely packed, plume-like cones were made up of sky-blue flowers which were tinged with violet at first but turned to true azure as the little bells opened. The lower bells turned violet-blue, while the upper ones were expanding. The cones were about $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches long and $\frac{3}{4}$ inch across at the base. The flowers were held on heavy 4-inch stems, and the plants had profuse olive-green foliage. This *Muscari* is a garden gem.

A group of 8 varieties were at their best about April 14, when these records were taken. Of these *Armeniacum* had broad, tapering spikes, $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches long and $\frac{3}{4}$ inch through at the base, being held erect on $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch stems. The color of the little bells was rich violet at first but turned greenish as the flowers matured. The variety was probably the largest of the earlier group, and it is one of the most important of the family.

Botryoides alba, the white variety of the common Grape Hyacinth, had $1\frac{3}{4}$ -inch tapering spikes $\frac{3}{8}$ inch through at the base on $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch stems, each plant putting up 2 or 3 flower-stems. The little bells, which are watery white, are sweetly scented. The spikes of *Alba* are more slender and seem more perfect in construction than those of the blue type, which had $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch spikes of bloom $\frac{5}{8}$ inch through at the base, on 5-inch stems. The color was clear blue, lightly tinted violet, and, like the white variety, there were at least two bloom-spikes to each plant.

Botryoides rosea had $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch tapering spikes, $\frac{3}{4}$ inch through, with 2 spikes to each plant. The flowers were opalescent white with just a hint of a pinkish tint. If this color is the same as in

THE GRAPE HYACINTH GROUP

its native haunts, whoever named it had quite a vivid imagination! From a few feet away, the spike appeared to be a dirty white.

Quite different was *Muscari conicum*, with $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch spikes, $\frac{5}{8}$ inch through at the base and on 4-inch stems. The dainty, fragrant rich violet bells were covered with a gray bloom. This species had profuse grass-like foliage and 3 bloom stems to each plant. It was somewhat like, but not so gloomy, as *Racemosum*.

Botryoides, Heavenly Blue, the variety commonly sold today, had strong 5-inch stems bearing $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch spikes, $\frac{3}{4}$ inch through at the base. Its blue flowers were somewhat darker in shade than the basic blue. The foliage was also more grass-like and profuse.

Latifolium had 6-inch stems with $1\frac{3}{8}$ -inch spikes, $\frac{5}{8}$ inch through at the base, carrying a two-toned flower-spike, the lower bells being of the deepest of violet, almost black, while those of the upper half of the spike were of azure-blue. To make this variety even more distinct, the lower bells drooped, while the upper ones stood out straight from the stem. The spikes were not pointed like the preceding varieties, though they did taper some. It is an attractive variety, but the plant's light green foliage lacks substance.

Racemosum, the last of this April 14 group, carried spikes $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and $\frac{7}{8}$ inch across at the base. They tapered to quite a short point and were held aloft on 5-inch stems. The color of the bells was a deep violet-blue, with a grayish bloom at first, but this wore away, leaving a very sombre-looking spike of flowers. There were 2 stems to each plant, which had profuse grass-like foliage.

Moschatum minor is, we understand, the variety which gave this family its name, as it is said to be the original musk-scented *Muscari*. It was in fine condition on May 20, with four other varieties. Its odd-looking loose spikes, $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches long and $\frac{7}{8}$ inch across, on 4-inch stems, were straight up and down, being of the same diameter at both top and bottom. In color, the bells were pale green, slightly tinted with violet. The flower had a very strong musky scent. Plants had 5-inch foliage. We consider this an interesting species because of its rather "different" appearance and its distinct musky fragrance.

Multiflorum was 7 inches tall over all, with $1\frac{3}{4}$ -inch spikes of an unusual form, inclined to be flat-topped and tapering but very little. The color was pale violet-blue with a pinkish tint at first, and the flowers had a delicious musky fragrance. The spikes were of unusual size and shape, but we could not call them beautiful; save for the delightful fragrance it did not seem to be valuable. The plants had 8-inch, grass-like foliage.

Neglectum carnea was another odd variety. It was 5 inches

tall, with 1-inch spikes, and the color was a funny mixture: the top three or four rows of bells were pure white, the next two or three a watery mauve, and the bottom row had a slight violet tint. All of these bells had quite white lips and a peculiar scent. The plants had 8-inch grassy foliage. All this made a weirdly interesting variety.

There were both the white (*alba*) and blue varieties of *M. paradoxum*. The blue sort was 9 inches tall, with 2½-inch flower-spikes of a sooty dark blue with a violet tint showing through when examined closely. Its flower has a pleasing musky scent. Plants of this had 12-inch, stiffly upright foliage. *Paradoxum alba* was also 9 inches tall with 2½-inch flower-spikes, tapering a little but only slightly conical. The color was the palest of green on the stem half of the bells and the outer half was grass-green. With this curious appearance there was also a pleasing fragrance. And this curious plant had only two or three leaves!

Comosum was not at its best until May 4, and then it lasted throughout the month. It was 9 to 12 inches tall, with a long brownish spike which was at first compact and only 1½ inches long. As the flowers opened the spike extended itself until it was finally 10 inches long with the flowers spaced ½ inch or more apart, the spikes being tipped with 1½-inch clusters of 20 to 30 small violet bells on 1-inch violet stems. The color of the lower flowers was at first deep violet, turning to a brownish violet on the mouth end and brownish green toward the stem as the flowers matured. This *Muscari* was not fragrant; it had profuse 10-inch foliage. When studied again on May 25 the bloom-stems were 18 inches tall, showing then a curiously distinct flower, with spikes of brownish bells topped with heads of tiny violet flowers.

Quite different was the scentless variety, *Comosum monstrosum* (see page 14), which bloomed May 4 when it was 6 to 10 inches tall and carried 4-inch spikes of feathery flowers 2¼ inches in diameter. These spikes were made up of a score or so of ¼ to ¾-inch bloom laterals each bearing 15 to 20 round violet shreds of various lengths from ¼ to 1 inch long. Each of these shreds were dotted with tiny white growths, looking as if the flowers were covered with lice! It had 10-inch foliage of two widths; one was 7/16 inch wide, the other only ½ inch. Visitors enjoyed this *Muscari* as being something really novel. Like the type, the flower-spikes developed from small brownish cones.

Of quite similar appearance was *Plumosum*, which is probably only a selection of *Monstrosum*. It was not fully in bloom until a week later than the preceding variety. Like it, it also began with small brownish cones which slowly extended into feathery spikes, and by May 25 these spikes were 3½ inches long and 2 inches through.

FINISHING WITH THE GRAPE HYACINTHS

The principal difference between this and the preceding variety was that it was a week later in blooming.

Muscari azureum is delightful, and belongs in all spring gardens. Most of us are familiar with the Heavenly Blue type, and Armeniacum, which is larger than the common variety, seems to be the choice of the type, although Botryoides alba and the blue are both desirable. Conicum, Latifolium, and Racemosum are on the curious side. Moschatum minor, on the other hand, like mignonette should be in every garden for its delightful fragrance. Multiflorum, Neglectum carnea, the Paradoxums and Comosum are simply collector's items, and not of particular garden importance. Comosum monstrosum or plumosum deserve a place for their interesting feathery blooms, which are assuredly different from any of the garden flowers ordinarily grown.

This Muscari collection gave us interesting flowers for many weeks. While some of the varieties are quite unobtrusive, there are several that really are worth while for their own beauty, while some of the oddities deserve a place in any garden taking pride in the less usual things.

—R. M. H.

Shop Talk

This number of Breeze Hill News will be the thirty-first. In June, 1927, the first issue outlined the general idea of the publication which has since been continued and extended. It now seems worth while here to repeat the thoughtful words of the first page of the first number:

"Our job, and by that we mean the business of the J. Horace McFarland Company and the McFarland Publicity Service, is to sell seeds, plants, and bulbs for our customers. We do this by words and pictures, printed in appropriate leaflets, posters, catalogues, and advertisements.

"Since we must know plants in order to write about them effectively, we must have a place to study them and to make the kind of pictures which will best sell them. This first-hand knowledge and illustrative material are secured in Breeze Hill Gardens.

"Breeze Hill has been the laboratory of this business for many years. From the earliest snowdrop of spring until the Christmas

BREEZE HILL NEWS

MOUNT PLEASANT PRESS SHOP TALK

rose begins to fade, our copy-writers, photographers, and colorists use the garden daily for facts and inspiration. That means that Breeze Hill is working for us the full twelve months of the year. Thousands of photographs have been made from specimens in its borders and beds. Accurate data of habits of flowers, fruits, and a multitude of plants have been secured, classified, and properly filed for reference.

"Breeze Hill is not a botanical garden in the scientific sense. It is a place where are carefully grown many of the plants, bulbs, annuals, and perennials that are fundamental to the horticultural industry. But not only the usual things; our connections with the Arnold Arboretum and other great public and private collections of plants, as well as most cordial relations with plantsmen here and overseas, bring us many novelties in shrubs, bulbs, annuals, perennials, and roses which are accurately observed and recorded at Breeze Hill long before they reach the general trade.

"Thus Breeze Hill is, in a sense, a test-garden, an experimental garden, an introducing garden, and at all times a place for study and observation.

"Many of these new things are found unworthy. Others prove good and are potential sources of prestige and business to the nurserymen and seedsmen who will get them into American commerce."

That much-lamented associate, G. A. Stevens, developed the complete and candid discussion of worth-while subjects, and his successor, R. Marion Hatton, has not lowered the standard. That we have sometimes been roundly criticized, and occasionally abused, for having told the truth as we see it, does not decrease what we believe is the value of the statements and observations presented.

We do want to help make of America an all-over garden through the nurserymen and seedsmen and florists who offer for sale the plants, shrubs, roses and garden beauties of all the earth.

So far as information is at hand, there is no other place on earth at which the same service is either proposed or rendered as that available to the horticultural trades at Breeze Hill.

This service is not mere printing or mere advertising. It relates closely to the critical investigations of the American Rose Society; to the vitally important conclusions of the All-America seed trials. It touches upon the great botanical gardens, the greater nurseries. It aims to make the garden a year-round source of inspiration, recreation and advantage. It proposes something that may be sold and enjoyed every month in the year.

Does Breeze Hill add to our costs? Yes, it does, but not much more than one per cent on our volume. Is it worth this much to get the truth?

—J. H. McF.



SCILLA
nonscripta and *Hispanica* varieties

THE PUMP-HOUSE WALK AT BREEZE HILL